

## What's On: Adam Kay, Amateur Transplants

Written by Administrator

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In 2005, London Underground - a hilarious and unflattering depiction of travelling by Tube recorded by Amateur Transplants to the tune of The Jam's Going Underground - became one of the first songs to go viral.

Almost everyone had an email with it on or carried it around on their phone.

For Adam Kay, who recorded the song, it was a massive surprise even though he and fellow band member and medical student Suman Biswas had been gigging for seven years.

"It literally happened over the course of a day or two," he said. "A bloke I knew texted me and said he had just been emailed my song. Over the next 24 or 48 hours I think the whole of my phone book had texted me as well.

"YouTube was in its infancy but everyone was sending it to each other. It definitely helped even though we didn't make a penny out of it back then. .

"But then rather than doing shows where no-one had heard of me, people knew the song. So it sold shows."

Seven years on and Kay performs solo after Biswas made the decision to devote all his time to medicine.

However, the song that took them to new heights of success endures because of its subject matter.

"About two years ago we put a bunch of songs from a couple of albums on iTunes and that song did very well," said Kay, who is performing a one-off gig on the Isle of Dogs next month.

"You only have to have been on the Tube once to understand it. I was actually late for a meeting this morning because the District line was having some issue."

Kay's decision to leave the medical profession has reaped rewards for comedy fans and he's been selling out theatres across the country.

However, it's a loss to the sick and weary - and the prospect of damaged karma persuaded him to give tens of thousands of pounds of his earnings to Macmillan Cancer Support.

"Originally everything we made from gigging went to charity but as it got bigger our management company told us it didn't make sense," he said. "So I decided to give 10 per cent to charity.

"You go into medicine because you're good at science and want to help people and that is what I miss about the job - - it definitely wasn't the hours, the blood and the general disruption to your life.

"But I miss the interaction with patients and the feeling you've done a good thing.

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"In comedy people tell you they think you're funny but that's not quite the same."

Before a six-week nationwide tour this spring, Kay is doing a performance at the Isle of Dogs newest venues, the state-of-art Lanterns Studio Theatre near South Quay.

Lanterns plans to host a number of musical and theatre shows over the coming months after the venue received a Yamaha piano Elton John used to use to practise on.

Lanterns director Janet Viola is hopeful the acquisition will attract talent.

Kay said: "Someone from Lanterns approached me after a gig I did recently as they wanted to put some comedy on down there.

"So I went to the venue to see if it was suitable. It's a great space for comedy with a fantastic piano.

"Normally when a comedy club says they have a piano it's a 40-year-old beer-soaked keyboard but this is something else completely."

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